

Message Text

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TO USINT HAVANA

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EXDIS

FOL BOGOTA 2799 SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO CARACAS MAR 27, 1978
REPEATED TO YOU QUOTE

S E C R E T BOGOTA 2799

EXDIS

ARA FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY TODMAN

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINR, MOPS, CU, UR, VE, BR, CO
SUBJ: BRIEFINGS OF SELECTED LATIN AMERICAN LEADERS ON
CUBAN INVOLVEMENT IN AFRICA

REF: STATE 75151

2. PRESIDENT LOPEZ INFORMS ME THAT HE IS CONVINCED THAT FIDEL
CASTRO IS CONSTRUCTING HIMSELF A POLITICAL POSITION AMONG THE
BLACK NATIONS. THE PRESIDENT CONSIDERS THE PRESENT INTERVENTION
IN AFRICA A SUBSTITUTE FOR THE ORIGINAL CASTRO PLAN TO EXPORT
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REVOLUTION TO LATIN AMERICA, WHICH ULTIMATELY WAS A FAILURE. HIS
CURRENT AFRICAN VENTURE IS DESIGNED TO GAIN STATURE AND INFLUENCE
IN THE BLACK REPUBLICS IN THE CARIBBEAN. HE MENTIONED JAMAICA
SEVERAL TIMES. THE PRESIDENT, HOWEVER, BELIEVES THAT BELIZE IS
CASTRO'S MOST IMPORTANT OBJECTIVE IN THE AREA. IF HE SHOULD
MANAGE TO OBTAIN A FOOTHOLD THERE, THIS WOULD PERMIT HIM A BASE
OF OPERATIONS TO SUBVERT THE REST OF CENTRAL AMERICA. THE

PRESIDENT SAID HE HAD READ AN INTELLIGENCE REPORT INDICATING THAT CASTRO HAD PLANS FOR RADIO TRANSMITTERS IN BELIZE. WITH THE OLIGARCHIC AND NON-DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENTS WHICH PREVAIL IN CENTRAL AMERICA, THESE WOULD BE EASY PREY.

2. THE PRESIDENT ALSO SAID THAT HE HAD READ A REPORT WHICH HE COULD NOT SOURCE RELATING THE AFRICAN INTERVENTION TO POPULATION PRESSURES IN CUBA. AFTER SOME DISCUSSION, HE AGREED THAT THIS SEEMED SOMEWHAT FANCIFUL BUT NOT TO BE DISMISSED OUT OF HAND.

3. THE PRESIDENT ALSO QUOTED FROM A REPORT FROM THE COLOMBIAN AMBASSADOR TO MOSCOW WHO BELIEVES THAT THE SOVIET LOGISTICS SUPPORT HAS REDOUNDED TO THE BENEFIT OF CASTRO IN THE EYES OF THE THIRD WORLD. THE THESIS IS, HOW CLEVER OF THE CUBANS TO HAVE THE SOVIETS PICK UP THE TAB FOR THEIR ADVENTURES. IN EFFECT, THE AFRICAN INTERVENTION IS COSTING THEM VERY LITTLE. CASUALTIES ARE LOW; THE CUBANS HAVE BEEN SUPPLIED WITH THE LATEST IN ARMAMENTS; THE PRESIDENT BELIEVES IT WOULD BE VERY DIFFICULT TO DISCREDIT THE CUBANS FOR THEIR TIES WITH THE SOVIETS IN THE LIGHT OF THIS ATTITUDE.

4. THE PRESIDENT SAID THAT FROM THE STANDPOINT OF PUBLIC OPINION THE HORN OF AFRICA, ANGOLA, ETC., ARE FAR AWAY. HE HIMSELF, HOWEVER, IS VERY CONCERNED ABOUT CASTRO'S GROWING STATURE WITH THE BLACK REPUBLICS IN THE HEMISPHERE AS INDICATED ABOVE. HE IS AT A LOSS AS TO WHAT MIGHT BE DONE ABOUT THIS BUT HAS AN
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OPEN MIND ON THE SUBJECT. HE WOULD BE HAPPY TO HEAR OF ANY IDEAS DEVELOPED IN THE COURSE OF PRESIDENT CARTER'S TRIP TO LATIN AMERICA. ASECIO UNQUOTE VANCE

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